GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:315
ANSWERED ON:20.11.2001
SMUGGLING OF ANCIENT HISTORICAL STATUES
PADAMSEN CHAUDHARY

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of large scale smuggling of ancient historical statues ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether the Government have taken any steps to check smuggling of ancient historical statues ; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (I.D. SWAMI)

(a) & (b): There is no material before the Government to suggest that smuggling of ancient historical statues is taking place on a large scale.

(c) & (d): All the field formations under the Customs Department including DRI are alert and vigilant to check smuggling of goods including smuggling of rare historical idols out of the country. Measures have also been drawn up by the Archaeological Survey of India in consultation with the agencies such as Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Central Bureau of Investigation, Customs and the State Governments to Check the theft of antiques and their smuggling by stepping up of vigilance and intensifying checking at Customs exit points as well as by strict enforcement of the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972. Armed police guards have also been deployed at select monuments and sculpture sheds.